

nothing more.¹ Why Disraeli
should have taken
so much trouble to preserve the
anonymity of the
book, or whether he had any more solid
reasons than a
native love of mystery and a desire to follow
the fashion
which Scott had established and to which
lesser lights
like Plumer Ward had conformed, we
cannot be sure;
but the publisher was so far from disliking
the mystery
thus created that he skilfully availed
himself of it for
purposes of his own. A master of the art of
advertising,
Colburn controlled, or was in a position
to influence,
several of the best-known organs of
literary opinion;
and presently in the daily journals and in
weekly and
monthly periodicals hints began to
be given of the
approaching appearance of a new society
novel by an
author who for obvious reasons
desired to remain
anonymous and in whose pages all the
leading people
of the day were to appear under thin
disguises. The
book was to be 'extremely satirical,' and was
to contain
'portraits of living characters, sufficient
to constitute
a National Gallery'; it was to be 'a sort
of Don Juan
in prose,' and the hero was 'to become
acquainted with
every literary and fashionable character
in existence.*
By arts such as these curiosity
was aroused and
expectation created, and when towards the
end of April
Vivian Grey appeared in two octavo volumes
its success
was at once assured. Long reviews were
published in
many of the leading newspapers and
periodicals; society
amused itself by endeavouring to identify
the originals
of the characters; and at the same time

speculation,
diligently fomented by the ingenious
Colburn, raged as
to the identity of the author. From their
different points
of view both publisher and author had every
reason to be
satisfied with the success they had
achieved.

Though we may safely assume that Disraeli
was not averse from the prospect of notoriety,
there is nothing to show that he had any real
responsibility for the puffing

¹ Layard, I, p. 46.